

CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY RESEARCH



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INDEX

Introduction

Preface

I. The programme: Promoting active participation of the community and the ecosystem approach in protecting environment of Hanoi lakes

1.1. Building a network of people interested in Hanoi lakes

- Website of Hanoi Lakes
- Establish map of 6 main districts
- Create a television and radio program about Hanoi lakes

1.2. Set up the information center for Hanoi Lake

- Building background knowledge for lake management
- Academic activities
- International Conference about Hanoi lakes
- Develop "Framework of management plan of Hanoi lakes"

1.3. Building the capacity of community groups

- Building the capacity of Women Association, Veterans Association in the mission of protecting the local environment in Hanoi

1.4. Green, Clean, Beautiful and Blooming Campaign

- Awareness Event at lake
 - Supporting initiatives green-clean-beautiful- blooming of the women associations from wards
-

II. Programme: The school of young pioneers in the field of protecting environment and climate change in Vietnam

III. Programme: The community supervises the environment

- 3.1. Investigate the supervising capability of community in the industrial zone
 - 3.2. Evaluate the current condition and building the model of community improving and protecting the wetlands
-

IV. Programme: Studying the Environment and Poverty Reduction in Huong Hoa – Quang Tri province

Building skills for organization

Main partners/ Orientation of the development in 2013

INTRODUCTION

Established in the end of 2009, under the Vietnam Union of Science and Technology Associations, Center for Environment and Community Research (CECR) gathers devoted scientists, officers to research and implement environmental protection projects with community support in order to improve the quality and development of economy-society, and poverty reduction in Vietnam. Center focuses on governance issues of shared resources, institutional policy, dialogue policy, and provides recommended solutions to change management practices, restore and protect the environment, and improve the efficiency of social and economic resources.



PREFACE

In 2012, with support from sponsors, partners and community, CECR has been continuing long-term efforts to protect natural resources including lakes and water resources in Vietnam. We also continue holding activities under our orientation to support community on environmental protection. Within the framework of the Hanoi lakes program, the Center set up academic meetings and organized international conferences which aimed at sustainable using of Hanoi lakes. These activities built the initial foundation for the program of research of managing surface water in Vietnam's urban of the Center.

In order to building competence, the Center has developed a training program to improve competence for the community as Women Association, Veterans Association, The school of young pioneers in the field of protecting the environment and climate change in Vietnam, and environment programs for youth, as a premise for the deployment of recovery, management and protection model of Hanoi lakes in the future. In addition, the Center has associated with the Environment Economic Magazine, and Urban Research and Infrastructure Development Institute to support the establishment and operations of Hanoi lakes Club.

About the community monitoring environment program, Center continues research and investigates environmental monitoring competence of community at industrial zones located in 6 main provinces: Ha Nam, Nam Dinh, Thai Binh, Hai Phong, Hai Duong, and Hung Yen.

The Studying Environment and Poverty Reduction program in HuongHoa-Quang Tri was successfully organized through implement the subject: 'Estimate the situation of approaching the social services by minority ethnic at industrial plant areas'. On the basis of 8 surveys from 8 Vung Lia communes regions, HuongHoa district - Quang Tri province, the Center built the current situation of social services approaching in the regions within strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats about recommended solutions.

In the last three years, the Center has gradually built the management competence of officers, also in professional knowledge, management skill and strengthens knowledge and human resource management system. The Center constructed expert networks both widely and deeply. In the following years, the Center will continue enhance the competence of profession and management, and build development partners to create more specific results with wider influence.

In this occasion, I would like to express my sincere thankful to the Ministry of Science and Technology, Vietnam Union of Science and Technology Associations, Hanoi University of Science and Technology, National University of Engineering, Cassava Starch factory Huong Hoa (Quang Tri), the Women Association of Hoang Van Thu, Quang An, Nhat Tan and Ngoc Khanh Ward, Central Women School, National Library of Vietnam, VTV2, Galaxy Communications Company, and scientist , colleagues, pupils, students who collaborated with the Center. Especially, the Center would like to thank the sponsors: Environmental Protection Fund of Vietnam, The Embassy of the Czech Republic, the U.S. Embassy, and The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) for supporting Hanoi lakes project. This effective collaboration is a significant proof of the involvement of the parties in the protecting environment and we hope this collaboration will continue to expand in depth and width.

Director



Nguyen Ngoc Ly



I. The programme: Promoting active participation of the community and the ecosystem approach in protecting environment of Hanoi lakes

1.1. Building a network of people interested in Hanoi lakes

- Website of Hanoi Lakes

The website of Ha Noi Lakes has been launched since June 2011. This is the first website about Ha Noi lakes consists of six main sections including: Hanoi Lakes program, Hanoi lakes book, community protection, photo gallery of Hanoi lakes. Initiatives about lake protection towards ecosystem approach and current condition of 120 lakes, ponds, marshes; results of analysis water condition and shore lake, and lake management; analysis of the management of Hanoi lakes; institutional report with 23 specific recommendations for the lake managing with the participation of the community have been posted on the Website. In particular, through this website, those interested in ponds, lakes can share and update the latest information of the condition and issues related to lakes today.



October 20th, 2012, under the auspices of the Center for Environment and Community Research, Vietnam Association for Environmental Economics, and Institute of Urban Research and Infrastructure Development, Hanoi Lakes Club was

officially established with the slogan "**Keeping water clean-where life begins**" Hanoi's Lake Club is a bridge and spiritual support for the community to join hands in order to restore and preserve Hanoi lakes system at the serious risk of water pollution; then turn Hanoi lakes into public spaces as a civilized, modern and elegant capital. Club's activity is picking up garbage around the lake on every Saturday morning. Currently, the club has regular activities with local community that cleaning some local ponds, lakes (Bay Mau Lake, Cheo Pond, Lang Pond, ...)

Through the Hanoi lakes website, Hanoi lakes Club, and International Conference, etc.. we has built a network of over 1000 people interested in Hanoi lakes including scientists from the Institutes, managers and planners in the field of urban and culture development, the communitiy from wards and non-governmental organizations. Many ideas of the protecting lake have been proposed from readers such as lake pollution, and people's awareness on lake protection...

- **Establish map of 6 main districts**

Mapping the lakes system of six main districts: HoanKiem, Dong Da, Tay Ho, CauGiay, Ba Dinh, and Hai Ba Trung district.

- **Create a television program about Hanoi lakes**

The Center cooperated with VTC10 to create a program "Hanoi lakes-ecological views." The content of this program reflects the current condition of the lakes in order to build and raise awareness of people to protect the lake ecosystem.

- **Radio program**

The Center cooperated with VOV to produce a radio program about Hanoi lakes which was posted on September 28th 2012 in both forums "Go Green" and "Environment". This is a series about the origin formation of Hanoi lakes, the role and function of the lake has been transformed due to the urbanization today. On that basis, the Center proposed necessary recommendations in order to contribute to protect the lake.

1.2. Set up the information center for Hanoi Lake

- **Building background knowledge for lake management.**

This is the monthly newsletter of Hanoi lakes which was posted on the website cecr.vn. Until September 30th with categories about lake knowledge, there are 12

newsletters including: Knowledge of lake ecosystems (ecosystem structure, what is a clean lake...), Beautiful lakes in the world (model of Balaton lakes (Hungary), Tahoe Lake (USA), Simcoe Lake (Canada)...). These have provided for readers knowledge and information about models of beautiful lakes in the world which have the participation of the community to create. Moreover, there are several categories of information about lake Hanoi lakes such as "Short Message of Center's activities related to lakes" (Training activities to enhance community's capability; Responding to Earth Hour event – April 22th). With "Readers share", readers can share ideas, report current condition of Hanoi lakes and contribute their initiative to rescue Hanoi lakes. Currently, after one year operated, "Hanoi lakes newsletter" was sent to more than 500 people and received about 150 contributed comments. With the multi-dimensional communications, newsletters can be considered as an information center of Hanoi lakes.

• Academic Activities

With the aim of discussing issues, aspects of academy, scientific in term of protect and sustainable Hanoi lakes, many academic meetings were held with the participation of many experts who are researchers from universities (Hanoi University of Science, National University of Civil Engineering, Hanoi University of Science and Technology), managers (Hanoi Department of Construction, Institute of Ecology and Environmental Resources, Vietnam Environment Administration)... The result is consistent with the following contents:

Unifying ecosystem approach in protecting Hanoi lakes: In order to apply this method for Hanoi lakes, coordinate with the local community is needed. The approach is based on directly resource as well as indirectly mental and service quantification. This must be shaped to suit each area and ensuring benefits for community and local government.

- Determine the priority problems of Hanoi lakes: the first is making them alive again, become back the public space and the important thing is that build a long-term management program with the participation of the community and local government.

- Determine problems and shortcomings in management and institutional issues related to Hanoi lakes management.

- Determine barriers to community participation in protecting Hanoi lakes. These are complicated procedures which are hard to reach to the local community. Leaders of community are also lack of knowledge, information, skills in organizational procedures, performance.

• **International Conference about Hanoi lakes**

Hanoi, June 22th 2012 – Conference's theme " Using Hanoi lakes sustainable based on community in the context of urbanization and climate change" with the participation of 150 delegates who are experts from the environment, construction, architecture, history, and cultural sectors, as well as scientists, sociologists, entrepreneurs, communities, government agencies, and non-governmental organizations.



In particular, there are many leading experts in the environmental field from Hungary and United States attended the conference to share experiences of their own countries in protecting and restoring Bataton Lake of Hungary, Han River of Korea and Tahoe Lake of U.S.

It is also the first international conference on the protection of Hanoi lakes was held in Vietnam, with the coordination from Center for Environment and Community Research, Vietnam Union of Science and Technology Associations, Center for Natural Resources and Environmental Studies (Vietnam National University), , Galaxy Communications Company, Heath Bridge Organization (Canada), the U.S. Embassy and the Vietnam Urban Forum.

Some comments by the delegates of the conference

Vice Minister of Science and Technology Nghiem Vu Khai said: *"We can protect the ecosystem by applying technical solutions to restore and protect Hanoi lakes system. In addition, while implement, we need to consider about the adaption ability of lakes in the context of climate change."*

Mr. Hoang Duong Tung, Vice General Director, the Vietnam Environment Administration emphasized: *"Hanoi Lakes Project of CECR is a typical example of a bottom-up approach towards the action in order to address specific environmental issues. This approach should be encouraged and widely applied to other environmental issues."*

Delegate of the United States Embassy in Vietnam, Mr. David B. Shear said: *"The Embassy of the United States is fortunate to collaborate with CECR in the community-based efforts to restore and protect Hanoi lakes, cultural heritage and environment in which they represent. Moreover, in order to protect lakes, cooperation and coordination among government agencies, private sectors and communities are essential."*

"The economic growth of Hanoi is truly sustainable only when the problems of society and environment are solved effectively. The successful restoration of Hanoi lakes systems that made lake's ecosystem healthy to serve benefits of civil and city have to



become one of the most important indices which determine sustainable development of Hanoi. The Restoring Lake's ecosystem mission is facing many challenges and barriers and requiring suitable and synchronous solutions with the participation of social groups, residents around the lake, this is the factor determining the success of the project." Director of the CECR, Nguyen Ngoc Ly said. At the conference, the experts also agreed to launch the establishment of "Hanoi lakes lovers Club" to be set up soon in the near future.

The conference agreed with 6 solutions as follow:

1. Integrated solution for planning and management policy

- Integrating plans and building a network of lakes management in the overall management of urban planning;
- Planning of urban development must harmonize and maintain maximum functions of Hanoi lakes;
- Reducing waste and pollution (prevent at waste sources); should have treatment solutions for partial rainwater and waste of each lake, especially from roads and residential areas around the lake.
- Manage and design fences around the lake;
- Strengthen law enforcement; build sanctions to handle violations on the protection and sustainable use of lakes.
- Clarify specific the ownership, with administrative measures from senior to community. Clarify clearly the ownership of lakes, especially increasing the ownership of the community (eg: by naming according to the values of the community), should be clearly determine that ownership is responsible with planning and lake management and coordination mechanisms with concerned parties;
- Decisions regarding lakes need to be addressed at a higher administrative level rather than with the participation of the community.

2. Digital Technology Solutions

- Some technology solutions to improve water quality including 3 main groups: Fixed Phosphorus; biological solution: use probiotics, aquatic plants; physical, mechanical solutions: increases the dissolved oxygen.
- The proposed solutions must be integrated, have demonstration projects, and should take 5-10 years to implement.

3. Financial and institutional solutions

- Management and finance: define clearly responsibilities on lake management, using financial instruments on lake management.
- Mobilize own resource for the lakes protection such as establishing funds, raising funds from public and private sources, business, and community.
- Facilitate for the involved parties, including people and organizations who involved: building a clear framework for the participation of community/ involved parties and apply the principle of "user to pay".

4. Construction and non-construction solutions

The solutions must comply with the laws of nature, especially the cycle and water balance, as well as must have the foundation of science and technology techniques.

The construction solutions include:

- Build fences and roads around the lake, planting flowers and ornamental.
- Dispose the wastewater.

5. Reinforce solution:

- Strengthen international cooperation and exchange experience in the planning and management of urban's lakes.
- Local communities associate with other organizations such as: scientists and businesses to create resonant power.
- Promote community participation from the women association, veterans association, pupils, students, farmers association, etc...

6. Training, improving communication and awareness solutions

- Promote the communication for Hanoi lakes system with a broad participation of community in order to raise awareness of entire people in Hanoi, residential areas around the lake and people who live by the service at the lake, raising awareness of urban government at all levels about Hanoi lakes system.
- Enhance communication and support from governments, experts, associations, clubs in improving mobilization capability in term of encourage community to preserve and exploit Hanoi lakes system for the Board of Hanoi Lakes Management.
- All activities associate with the lake need to be consult with the community live around the lakes.
- Launch website, newsletters, radio channels and television programs about Hanoi lakes to spread and raise awareness on the protection and sustainable use of Hanoi lakes.

- **Develop "Framework of management plan of Hanoi lakes".**

With the direct help of HarryMc, a professional in wetlands field, the Center has developed "Framework of management plan of Hanoi lakes".

Based on this framework, management plan of Cheo Pond and Lang Pond has been developed to prepare for implementation in 2013 if funded.

1.3. Building the capacity of community groups

- **Building the capacity of Women Association, Veterans Association in the mission of protecting the local environment in Hanoi.**

The objective of this training program is enhancing the competence of communities in the mission of protecting lakes environment, planning, contributing initiatives protect lakes environment with ecosystems and urban lakes. In January 5th & 6th 2012, at the School of Women's Union of Vietnam, CECR has organized training program: "Improving community's



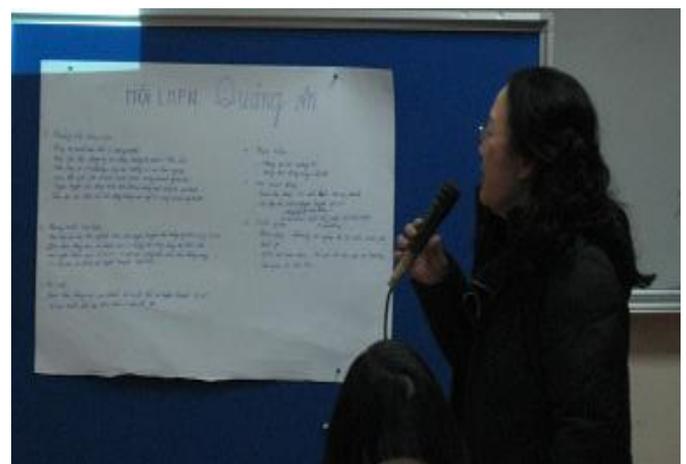
capability in the field of environmental protection in Hanoi". The training program is building capacity for community groups, first for the women association, veterans association and organizations directly involved in protecting Hanoi lakes.

Participants: 100 members of women association of city, staffs from women association of Hoang Liet, Lang Ha, Ngoc Khanh, Quang An, Hoang Mai wards, officers from Environment Police Department, officers from School of Women's Union and some media professionals from the network of Hanoi lakes lovers.

The program has got specialty contribution, knowledge support of environmental experts from Hanoi University of Science and Technology, Hanoi National University and Hanoi Environment Department. A small network has been formed between the members of the program.

Results: After the training program, many initiatives on environmental protection are proposed specifically and feasibly, capable of mobilizing the community participation.

Picture: *Initiatives of women association of Quang An ward.*



1.4. Green, Clean, Beautiful and Blooming Campaign

• Awareness Event at lake

With the objective of attracting attention of community to protect lakes, the Center organized the event in respond to Earth day – April 22th 2012 at Ngoc Khanh Lake with the theme “Raising awareness to protect environment towards the Earth Day 2012”. The message is: "The Earth Day – Let’s protect the Earth." Many meaningful activities were held such as planting trees, collecting garbage around the lake... The event attracted more than 300 participants from the Women Association, Veterans Association, local youth groups, sponsors (IUCN, UNHABITAT), and communications (VTV2, Galaxy)

Event was held on the Earth day April 22th 2012 by Center for Environment and Community Research associated with the General Department of Environment, the U.S. Embassy, and Ngoc Khanh Ward at Ngoc Khanh Lake.



Director of CECR has a speech at the event

Activity 1: Collecting trashes at Ngoc Khanh Lake, lake’s campus and Pham Huy Thong Street.



U.S. embassy officers pick up every small piece very hard

Activity 2: Planting trees on the Green - Clean - Beautiful - Blossoming street, women association of Ngoc Khanh ward proposed and self-management, has the participation of the leaders of VEA, the

U.S. Embassy and Leadership of VUSTA.



Activity 3: Painting lime on tree stumps around Ngoc Khanh Lake.

Activity 4: NGOs, Vietnam 350 group (GREEN EXCHANGE activity in exchange waste paper, plastic, clothing, old shoes get trees, exchange used plastic bags to take plastic ornaments; GREEN TALK propaganda activities about Climate Change, Pollution and Green Solution), companies, businesses household around the lake implemented response initiatives in Earth Day.

- **Supporting initiatives green-clean-beautiful- blooming of the women associations from wards.**

The Center supported initiatives aimed at mobilizing community to protect and preserve environment of some women associations from wards in Hanoi.

The initiatives include: Initiative on building green, clean, and beautiful, blooming street of the women association of Hoang Van Thu ward, initiative on putting signs that ban garbage, littering around ponds, lakes of women association of Quang An ward, or initiative to build green lifestyle at home and at office, saving electric enery, saving water, limit products that are not environmental friendly of the women officers from the environmental police department...



II. Programme: The school of young pioneers in the field of protecting environment and climate change in Vietnam

With the purpose of providing orientation about ecology and the earth, bringing forward basics content of sustainable development, enhancing working and studying skills by adding some practicing skill in environmental protection and management, Center for Environment and Community Research (CECR) launch this programme “The school of young pioneers in the field of protecting environment and climate change in Vietnam” with the sponsorship of the U.S. Embassy, IUCN Organization, and CECR.



The course includes two basic parts:

- Theory: Including lectures about ecosystem of Hanoi lakes, theory and safe methods of monitoring lakes, lake's quality according to water parameters and sensory; experiences of monitoring lakes in the US, theory, process, and monitoring skill. Besides, students are also trained some skills such as leadership, presentation, team-work, constructing and conducting projects, by both domestic and foreign professors, doctors, lecturer of CECR and IOGT

as well as experts on Environment, Ecology and Climate Changing fields from the U.S. Embassy.

- Practices: Students are split into groups and monitoring to get some parameters: pH, DO and temperature measurement, bank observation and interview nearby residents.

The first course was held in June, 2012 with the attendance of 50 students from many high schools in Hanoi. Two days after the course, each group had three weeks to practice monitoring some Hanoi lakes, such as: Nam Dong, Quynh, Hai Ba Trung, Kim Lien, Ngoc Khanh, Ho Me and Pho Linh pagoda pond.

The second course was organized from November 24th to December 16th 2012, including 60 students from many universities in Hanoi (e.g Hanoi University of Science and Technology, Vietnam National University of Science, Foreign Trade University, and National Economics University...). Three days after the course,



groups also spent three weeks to monitoring some Hanoi lakes (Cheo pond, Dam lake, Van Chuong lake, Thanh Nhan park lake).

After finishing this course, most students found out that this program was meaningful and helpful for young people. Hence, volunteers have ability to gather information about lakes by themselves, have the overview on the reality of Hanoi lakes then have an action on protecting lakes. Moreover, this programme is the chance for volunteers to communicate with



people who share the same concentration on protecting environment.

Through the observation, students noticed that 100% ponds and lakes were polluted and the shores were invaded by stalls. They also proposed some possible plans to ameliorate the water quality and protect the lakes. After the practices, students were required to write observation reports.



Center's officer guides how to monitoring

some water quality parameters

III. Programme: *The community supervises the environment*

3.1. Investigate the supervising capability of community in the industrial zone

In 2011, CECR did the investigation about the current condition of environment in industrial zones located in Red River delta. This is the groundwork to establish the investigation approach in 2012.

In 2012, CECR implemented the investigation about supervising capability of community in the North Delta's industrial parks, directly interviewed with the heads of management board of industrial zones, managers of infrastructure company, local government and residents nearby 6 typical industrial zones in Northern Delta including: Ha Nam, Nam Dinh, Thai Binh, Hai Phong, Hai Duong, Hung Yen.

The report of the investigation was presented at the conference "**Role of local environment-related NGOs in motivating supervising and protecting the environment**" in Hanoi on November 27th 2012, and in Hue on December 6th-7th 2012.

3.2. Evaluate the current condition and building the model of community improving and protecting the wetlands.

In 2012, CECR organized a lot of training and consultation for community in Nhat Tan, Quang An, Vinh Tuy wards, help raise awareness on the protecting local lakes. The program had the participation of more than 100 people in each ward. After the training, community's awareness has increased markedly. People have organized to cleaning local lakes by themselves. Specifically, the women associations of Quang An ward and Tay Ho District have organized a cleaning, tree painting, picking up trash along the road around West Lake. In addition, the women associations of Nhat Tan, Quang An wards held a mitting to remind people not to throw plastic bags, altar, incense into ponds, lakes of wards on holidays, and hanging signboards that ban garbage, waste into ponds, lakes.

IV. Programme: Studying the Environment and Poverty Reduction in Huong Hoa – Quang Tri province

Vung Lia located in Huong Hoa district, Quang Tri province is a typical successful district in transforming from the agricultural production model of self-sufficient to the industrial plant model. The villages of VungLia which are in border area, are the poorest ones, have the impoverished soil. Most residents are the ethnic groups of Van Kieu and Pako, who live like nomadism. In recent years, village has selected cassava as the main lucrative crop, which provides ingredient for the cassava starch factory of Huong Hoa.



Disseminating the basic services for Pako and Van Kieu's ethnic is a big work of the local. Natural disaster and dangerous topography is the cause of inefficient services.

CECR conducted the field work at eight villages in Huong Hoa district, Quang Tri province. Research group came to 400 families to interview directly, asked specifically 60 residents, carried out 25 discussions with the local: 16 discussions with residents, 8 dicussions with the basic service suppliers, and 1 discussion with companies, factories in the area. All of the conferences received the significant number of participations, the response about the current situation and the participation of locals toward social services, their desire to improve these kinds of service.

The results of research group brought out a general picture on the current situation of social services in VungLia, Quang Tri. In details:

Strengths: Facilities of basic social services such as: grid, communal road system, schools, medical stations, clean water... has been quite firm. The residents' income has been ameliorated in the recent years. The village achieved some goals on poverty reduction, woman right enhancement, building the solid region of farming.



Weaknesses: In spite of improvement on the quality of social services, these ameliorations are in the low level, the rapid downgrade of infrastructure, authorities' lacking abilities, working condition remains problems, ineffective management mechanism, remaining backward customs.



Opportunities: VungLia has potential chances to invest in planting cassava, aims to increase not only quality but also quantity. Life, welfare, and people's awareness are improving days after days, is the reason that demand and ability to approach to basic social service are increasing.

Threats: It remains some risks about soil resource, market and natural hazards when doing specializing cultivation. Pollution is also a big threat for factories there.

Based on the analysis above, the report has brought out recommendations on the policies and solutions about mobilizing the resources and carrying it out for residents of Vung Lia or people in mountainous regions in general.

BUILDING SKILLS FOR ORGANIZATION

With support from IUCN, the Center has focused on improving skills for organization, including:

- Training the financial management for all of the staffs.
- Consolidate the system of human resource management and financial management.
- Complete the internal control system.



MAIN PARTNERS



The main partners of the Center for Environment and Community research include: Hanoi University of Science and Technology, University of Civil Engineering, Vietnam National University, Vietnam Environment Protection Fund, the U.S. Embassy, the Czech Republic Embassy, International Union for Conservation of Nature, Galaxy Communications, National Library of Vietnam, Quang Tri Co.,Ltd, Healthbrigde Organization, etc.

THE ORIENTATION OF THE DEVELOPMENT IN 2013

The Center continues focusing on some main activities such as building the model of lakes managing, and developing the training course for young pioneers and community in term of protecting the environment and climate change. Otherwise, the Center is keeping classifying the field of research and management of resources, also building projects on applied researches based on foundation and strength of its own.

Developing the skills for organization will be the key mission of the Center in 2012. The Center continues enhancing the expertise competence, resources management, and the researching skill. The Center continues building the network of partners and network of implementation at local, spread the influencing in constructing the policies on managing and preserve environment.